

Tama's Trouble

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Summary: Tama and Tojo are kicked out of their home in the jungle by an old enemy... Can Simba, Nala and Haiba help?

***Chapter 1*: Chapter 1: A Nasty Tumble**

AN: Here I am, back again! Now, I think this is a story a lot of you have been waiting for, because it has... wait for it... Tama and Tojo! I know they're your favourites, so now it's their time to shine!

But first, I'd just like to thank you all for reviewing my previous story. I had a record number of reviews – the most I've ever had – and that's just brilliant! So, thanks, everyone! Keep me happy!

anonymous13: You asked for an answer, so you can have it. Yes, the Interceptor does speak like the very same one from the TV show. I really couldn't imagine any other voice!

Tama's Trouble

Chapter One: A Nasty Tumble

"Ow..."

The moan of pain could be heard throughout the jungle. It had persisted for the past few days now. Most of the other creatures near the area had already fled – they'd had more than enough of hearing the squeaky complaints. Just how long was this girl going to go on for?

"Ow..."

"There, there, Tojo," soothed Tama, rubbing her boyfriend's forehead with a paw. "I'm sure it'll get better in a day or two."

"You said that two days ago," replied the 'girl', who was in actual fact a cub called Tojo. He had a painful black eye and a few nasty-looking cuts over his body. It looked like he'd taken quite a nasty tumble... "I don't feel any different."

Tama and Tojo were located right in the middle of their home – a cosy little clearing in the jungle. It was well kept and clean – mostly due to Tojo's motherly, caring nature – and was more or less the perfect home for a couple like them.

"Well, that's to be expected," Tama told him. "After all, you did fall off a cliff."

"A cliff you pushed me from," Tojo reminded her.

"Okay, yes," Tama agreed, "but that was only to spare you a grisly death from that snake."

"A snake you angered in the first place," said Tojo.

"Yeah – but that was only because of the rock that hit him on the head," Tama countered.

"The rock *you* threw," Tojo responded.

Tama shook her head. "Look, it doesn't matter right now," she said. "All that matters is nursing you back to health. I will do everything in my power to help you—"

"*Power?*" Tojo squeaked. "No!" he cried, shaking his head. "No powers! I might grow an extra head! Or lose a leg!" He screamed. "You'll take my fur away! I know it!"

"Tojo, just calm down!" Tama exclaimed, slapping him across the cheek. "You're starting to hallucinate."

"I'm not hallucinating!" Tojo protested. "I just don't want any of your crazy powers to mess me up even more than I am already!"

"I can't be held responsible for not being trained enough," Tama told him. "And besides, I'm sure that my powers are at an expert level now. I've had enough time to perfect them. Watch..."

Tama turned around to face a nearby tree. She raised a paw—

—only for the tree to burst into flames!

Her eyes widened, and she smiled nervously. "Uh – I meant to do that," she said to Tojo, who didn't look too convinced.

"That could have been me!" Tojo said, eyes wide with shock. "I think you need to re-evaluate the strength of your powers!"

"I don't need to reorganise anything," Tama responded. "I'll get it right sooner or later. If anyone else magical came up against me, then they wouldn't have a chance. They'd just be completely second rate."

"Of course they would, Tama," said Tojo with a slight roll of his eyes. "Wait a second – if you pushed me from a cliff to supposedly protect me from that snake, then just where were *you* hiding?"

Tama's eyes shifted nervously. "Um, there was a convenient... tree just by the cliff. I hid in that." She shrugged her shoulders. "Sorry."

"You're just lucky that I like you too much," Tojo said. "Otherwise I wouldn't be so happy about being pushed from a cliff. Sounds like the type of thing you would do when you were still a nasty old witch."

"Don't call me a witch!" Tama yelled. "I was just... troubled, that's all. Don't make me turn you into a frog."

"Well, what if I *want* to be a frog?" Tojo retorted. "At least frogs don't fall off the top of cliffs. At least, I don't think they do. Then again, in this world, anything can happen."

"I don't see why you can't get up and walk," Tama said. "You don't look too bad. I've seen a lot worse, that's for sure."

"I'm sensitive," Tojo said sheepishly. "I feel pain a lot more than other animals. A death that takes five seconds for the average wildebeest will feel like a painful eternity to me!"

"Then it's lucky you have me to protect you," Tama said.

"But you're the one who pushed me from the cliff," Tojo said.

"Yeah, but that's above the point," Tama told him. "You're still alive, aren't you? I count that as a valuable achievement for me."

"Of course you do," Tojo sighed. "But next time, keep an eye out for convenient trees, okay?"

Tama smiled. "Okay. But only if you give me a massage."

"What?" Tojo let out a sigh of exasperation. "Just how many massages can you have in a week?"

"I need to keep my body finely tuned," she explained. "Oh, and you might want to get some water afterwards. I don't think that tree is going to last much longer."

"I think I'm going to die," Tojo moaned.

"That's the spirit!" Tama exclaimed, patting Tojo hard on the back. He gasped in pain. "You could do with a little pessimism once in a while – you're far too happy all of the time. Sadden up a bit."

"I think I'm sad enough already," Tojo said. "After all, I did fall from a cliff two days ago."

"Tojo, I think by now you can find something funny out of it," Tama told him. "Everyone loves a light-hearted, bone-crunching, near death experience!"

"What, like... running across the desert and then tripping over a bit?" Tojo suggested.

Tama nodded. "Indeed, Tojo. It's silly falls like that that make us laugh so much that our bellies ache for hours afterwards!" She sighed, smiling. "You ever killed someone, Tojo?"

"No."

"Oh. Well, there's that conversation exhausted, then."

They sat there in silence, neither of them knowing what to say to each other. Finally, Tojo piped up.

"So, what's going on with your powers, then?" he asked. "Why are you so desperate to use them?"

"Why do you think?" Tama retorted. "So I can protect my home and mate."

"Uh, we aren't exactly married yet—"

"That's above the point!" she interrupted. "If I say we're mates, then we're mates! And with my magic powers, I will be able to become the hero of the little kingdom we have here together. Isn't it what you've always wanted, Tojo? A place to call

your own?"

"Well, I guess," Tojo replied with a shrug. "Although it is kind of... lonely. Shouldn't we invite some friends over or something?"

"We don't have any friends," Tama said, waving such a fantasy away.

"Well, there's always Simba and—"

"They already have somewhere to live," Tama cut in. A look of sudden realisation hit her. "Hey, wait! I think I've got an idea! Why don't we invite some friends over?"

"That's what I just said—"

"It's rude to interrupted, Tojo," Tama said. "We should make some great, new, classy friends and invite them over. It's the only way we're going to make our lives ten times better. Sneaky plan, eh? They don't call me the Desert Scorpion for nothing, you know."

"No, they call you that because you're small, unpleasant and rather poisonous," Tojo replied.

"Tojo, shut up – you're not as interesting as me."

"Point taken." Tojo looked quite saddened.

Tama smiled and gave him a hug. "Aw, Tojo, I'm only kidding!" she said, kissing him on the cheek. "You know I love you, right?"

"Sure. Love you, too," he replied.

"Good. Now, how about that massage?" she asked.

"But I thought you wanted to make some 'classy' friends?" said Tojo, confused.

"Oh, there'll be plenty of time for that," Tama said with a wave of her paw. "I need to relax my body first."

"Okay, I'll do it," he said, giving in. "As long as you don't make me start with—"

"Start with the paws," Tama commanded.

Tojo shuddered.

***Chapter 2*: Chapter 2: Relaxation Time**

Chapter Two: Relaxation Time

Haiba narrowed his eyes, taking a deep breath as he enjoyed the fresh air and light breeze provided for him as he sat on the edge of the tallest cliff in the Pride Lands. "You know," he said, smiling, "there are three mysteries of life."

"And what are they?" Simba asked, curious.

He grinned. "Me, you, and Nala," he said, before chuckling at his joke.

Simba and Nala rolled their eyes, little smiles of their own forming. They were pretty used to Haiba's constant jokes and punchlines by now. It was just another ordinary day for them.

"Very funny, Haiba," said Nala.

"You're looking extra happy today," Simba noticed. "Any special reason?"

"Just look at me," Haiba said, gesturing to his body. "It may have taken me three weeks, but my size has dropped down to exactly what it used to be."

"No more Don Haiba, then?" asked Nala, raising an eyebrow.

"Yo! I mean, yeah," he replied. "No more of that stuff. Let's just try to forget about it – it was an embarrassing time."

"You're telling me," Simba remarked. "I had a mind-sucking frog in my head. Why, if he was here right now, then he'd be squashed before you could say, 'Ow, that really hurt.'"

"Don't forget my little 'eye problem'," Nala said. "I think that Family of Blood left a bit of an effect on me."

"They live in you," Haiba said. "Come to think of it, that sounds like the title of an awful song. Almost as bad as Whoops, I Fell off My Elephant."

"How does that song go?" Nala wondered.

"Well—"

Simba covered Haiba's mouth. "No singing," he interrupted. "Now's not the time."

"Then what *is* it time for?" Nala asked. "Right now, we're doing nothing. Just kind of... enjoying the view."

"Exactly the point," Simba said. "It's relaxation time for us. The less stress, and the more time to ourselves, the better chance we'll have at fighting the dark forces of... um, darkness."

"I ain't complaining," Haiba said, as he lay on his back, forepaws behind his head. "It's proven in the Grand Lands that relaxing for long periods of time will increase your strength to that of a fully grown lion. We might even grow manes by the end of it."

"Lionesses don't grow manes," Nala informed him.

"Ah – but that's the magic of the Grand Lands, you see," Haiba said with a smile. "In my pride, all the Nalas have become Alans, if you get what I mean."

"Remind me never to go there ever again," Nala said.

They sat there in silence.

"So how long have we been sat here?" she asked.

"About seven minutes," Haiba replied.

Nala sighed, bored out of her mind. "Man, it feels like... eight and a half minutes."

"Patience, Nala," said Haiba. "If we wait long enough, then I'm sure something surprisingly exciting and dangerous will come our way."

"How'd you work that out?" Simba asked, squinting in confusion at Haiba.

Haiba shrugged. "Well, it's just what happens normally around here."

The three cubs only had to wait three seconds before the cliff began to rumble.

"Whoa – what the heck is that?" Nala asked, looking around.

Haiba grinned. "I love it when I'm right."

"Oh, no. I think our weight is causing the cliff to shake," Simba supposed worriedly. "If we don't get off, then we might end up—"

The ground beneath them suddenly gave way, sending Simba, Nala and Haiba hurtling to their doom!

"—*falling!*"

"I'm sure we'll be all right!" Haiba yelled as he fell towards the ground. "Flap our paws hard enough and we might just fly!"

"*Are you crazy?*" Nala cried.

"Extremely!"

The three cubs screamed at the top of their voices, awaiting a horrible fate at the hands of solid ground...

Splash!

Simba coughed and spluttered, spitting water out of his mouth from the small river he had just landed in. "What the...?"

"Well, that was a close one!" Haiba exclaimed, smiling happily as he emerged from the river.

"You're insane!" Nala yelled, looking around as several fragments of rock – the remains of the cliff – crashed into the ground by the river. "We could have been killed!"

"Don't look at me – I didn't make the cliff fall down!" Haiba argued. "Besides, that was kinda fun. It's just lucky that there was a convenient river here to save us. Never doubt a healthy supply of drinking water."

"You're just lucky I don't pound ya," Nala threatened, raising a paw in anger. "Simba, tell Haiba's he's wrong."

"Well, like he said – he didn't make the cliff fall," Simba said with a sheepish smile. "He's kinda innocent, in a way."

Nala frowned, rolling her eyes. "Whatever you say." She got out of the river, shaking herself dry. "Well, I don't know about you, but I want to get out of this place."

"What do you mean?" Simba asked, clambering out of the river beside her.

"The Pride Lands," Nala said. "Since it's so quiet, I say we should go and visit some friends."

"We don't have any friends," Haiba said. "We're insane, remember?"

"We're not insane," Simba countered. "Just... a little different. I mean, who would you believe? A rat or honest bugs like us?"

"Well, rats can sometimes tell the truth," Haiba said.

"Oh, forget it," said Simba, waving a paw in the air. "Now, Nala, just who are these 'friends' you want to visit?"

"Tama and Tojo," Nala replied.

Simba and Haiba gasped.

"Tama?" exclaimed Simba. "But she tried to kill you!"

"Well, Mr She's-Changed-A-Lot, I think, because I'm very nice, that we should pay her and Tojo a nice visit," Nala told him. "And it's a lot better than just sitting on the top of cliffs waiting for them to fall off."

"Fair point," Haiba agreed. "Let's go see Terrible Tama and Tiny Tojo. You coming, Super Simba?"

"Will you stop it with the nicknames?" Simba complained. "The cheesiness is starting to get to me."

"No, it's not."

"He's right, actually," Simba suddenly said to Nala. "What is it about Haiba that makes me want him to never stop talking?"

"Hypnotic cheesiness power," Haiba explained with a little smile. "Works every time. Nala's been giving in to it ever since we first met. It's how I get *all* the girls – and sometimes the boys..."

"I'm going to pretend I didn't just hear that," Simba said, before walking away. "Come on, then. Let's go pay a visit to the only other crazy cubs in the world. I'm sure we'll get on like a tree on fire."

"Either that or we end up in some kind of war over who has the better catchphrase," Haiba responded. "I like my 'I'm so hot, I'm cool' routine. That'll defeat them for sure."

"Or maybe we'll just calmly have a nice conversation," Nala suggested. "Why does everything for you always have to end in a bloody battle?"

"I've been brought up on nothing but bloody battles," Haiba replied. "It's just how my life has worked out. And besides, all we do is stop the bad guys all day. We might as well cover ourselves in blood and guts and say, 'Throw me to the monsters.'"

"It makes me wonder if Tojo and Tama even *remember* us," said Simba. "I mean, it's been a while since we've seen them."

"Well, I kinda... bumped into Tojo a few weeks ago when we split up," Nala revealed. She looked a little displeased with herself. "It wasn't exactly the friendliest of meetings, though..."

"What?" asked Haiba.

"I put my claws around his throat and said something really cheesy," she explained. "I think I owe him an apology."

"I bet that's all this is about," Haiba said to Simba. "She just wants to say sorry to the poor kid."

"What?" Nala laughed nervously. "Don't be silly. I just... want to pay them a... visit."

"Sure," said Haiba sarcastically. "We believe ya."

"Oh, come on," said Nala. "Could one cub lie to another?"

"Only if her mouth was moving," Haiba retorted.

AN: Oh, Haiba, you're so funny! Will you marry me? Just kidding. I know several of you have proposed to him already. So, how's this one going to go? From the synopsis, I'm sure you've realised an old enemy will be returning. But who? What? When? All of these questions are completely pointless unless you actually want to know the answer. So check in tomorrow for more madness, anarchy and bad jokes. Don't forget to review – I'll be on time this week! Honest! I'm a good boy!

Chapter 3: Chapter 3: Back from the Dead Again

AN: More chapters, fresh from the keyboard. I'm sure you're all very eager to see who the 'old villain' is. You might just know him...

HeeroKitsune17: Horrible Haiba? Nah! Hot Haiba is more like it! And I know – Disney should hire me someday. If I suddenly find \$10,000,000 in cash, then I'll be sure to make this into a Saturday morning cartoon.

the-mysterious-other: Yeah, this is the 'funny' story of the series. I think we've had more than our fair share of dramatic ones in the past few months. I suppose *My Immortal* could be considered comedic, but then again, Tara's guts *did* explode all over Simba, Nala and Haiba. Oh, well. I'm psychotic that way.

anonymous13: *The Lion King II* is the very definition of 'average'. The only song I actually like is *My Lullaby*, funnily enough. I think *Upendi* is the stupidest song I've ever heard in my life – next to all the modern nonsense you hear these days. And I don't usually like Broadway musicals, but their version of *The Lion King* is extremely laughable. I'm sorry, but I just can't take those costumes seriously. I just end up laughing.

DrKill8000: Cue the *Blackadder* theme. Well done for getting the British Comedy Quote of the Week. I would give you a massive bar of chocolate, but they haven't invented a way to transfer food over the internet yet. Sad, huh?

LionKingFactsGuy2: Yeah, Tojo can't help his squeakiness. If this were an actual cartoon, then Tojo would *definitely* be voiced by a girl. It actually makes it cuter.

Well, that's all the replies for today. Enjoy the show!

Chapter Three: Back from the Dead Again

In a quiet corner of the jungle, all seemed to be well. Birds flew gracefully in the sky, and insects chirped as they went about their daily business. Everything was just happy, happy, happy.

Well, that is, until they all dropped down dead.

"Ow!" Hago yelled, batting a fallen dead bird off the top of his head. "Watch where you're dying, you miserable wretch! I didn't come back to life for this!"

Hago looked around the area he had ended up in. "Hmm... it seems that I have ended up in the jungle," he concluded. "More than a suitable place to conduct the ultimate revenge scheme..."

He cackled evilly at the top of his voice, revelling in the thought of gaining vengeance over his greatest enemies—
—but then he frowned. "Bah!" he exclaimed. "I'm not going through any of that again. I think it's time for an early retirement."

Hago took a few steps forward, when a voice suddenly cut through the air.

"Hago, babe, just what do you think you're doing?" it asked.

Hago raised an eyebrow. "Death?" he called, confused. "How on earth are you talking to me? You've been dead for ages now!"

"Well, it's quite complicated," the voice of Death explained. "You see, I am very much dead. But I know everything that you're going to say, so I left you this pre-recorded message."

"Don't be ridiculous, you fool!" Hago shouted. "You can't possibly know everything that I'm going to say!"

"I'm Death, baby," he replied. "I know everything about everyone."

"Oh, really?" Hago said with a little smile. "Then in that case, how didn't you anticipate your death?"

"Um... don't ask me trick questions!" he snapped. "That's not important right now! The important thing is that you're not supposed to be live and kicking! You need to be... dead and... punching, or... Oh, you get what I mean! You get back into the darkness right this instant! How did you even escape?"

"A magic genie gave me a helping hand," Hago explained. "He took a wrong turn at Heaven, you see."

"Curse you and your tricks! You've already died twice! Haven't you come to the conclusion that, you know, your luck is going to run out sometime?" Death asked.

"My luck will never run out!" Hago declared. "I've already come back to life twice! I think it speaks for itself!"

"Aw, it won't be long before you're dead again," Death assured him. *"You're nothing but a second rate failure, Hago. You'll be chilling back in the darkness by tonight. I guarantee it. Why, all of your other plans—"*

"I don't have any other plans!" Hago informed him. "Now that I've come back to life, I've decided to go straight."

Death seemed to pause for thought. *"Now, when you say 'straight'—"*

"Not *that* kind of 'straight'!" Hago roared. "I'm taking an early retirement. I'm going to live out the next few million years relaxing in the ultimate dream home. I'm sure there are plenty of prime real estate ventures around here I can take a look into."

"You've gotta be kidding me," said Death. *"You can't retire! You're supposed to be evil!"*

"I *am* still evil," Hago said. "I'm just giving up on my revenge schemes. You're right – they all go up in smoke. So what's the use? I'm better off finding somewhere to settle down – plus there might be easier victims to murder."

"Oh, yeah?" challenged Death. *"Well, Hago, you're just lucky that I'm dead – and that I decided to make this extremely complex pre-recorded message – otherwise I just might have ended your life right this instant!"*

"Received and understood," Hago said. "Are you finished?"

"Yes," Death grumbled, not sounding too happy about it.

"Good."

Hago continued forwards, chuckling to himself. "Now I have no one to oppose me!" he exclaimed. "No Simba, no Nala; nobody!" He grinned. "Oh, this is turning into *such* a productive day!"

Hago seemed to be the happiest lion alive. Not only was he finally giving up on chasing around his greatest enemies – one of them his own daughter – but he was also getting a very luxurious retirement. An immortality with which he could do whatever he wanted! Wasn't that what *everyone* wanted?

However, Hago's happiness was short lived when a lion jumped down in front of him.

He exclaimed in surprise, jumping back. "Who the hell are you?" he asked the lion. "Can't you see I'm trying to retire in peace? And find my magical staff while I'm at it! I'm sure I left it in this miserable place somewhere..."

"Silence, infidel!" the lion yelled.

Hago narrowed his eyes. "What did you just call me?"

"I said be quiet!" he shouted. "You have no right to be walking on our territory."

Hago's eyes shifted left and right. *"Your territory? Who in the world do you think you are?"*

"I am Kiongozi – leader of the Mungu Pride!" he introduced himself. "And *you*," he accused, pointing to Hago with a claw, "are a trespasser!"

"I didn't even know this was your stupid land!" Hago argued. "And I have no interest in it, anyway! Let me pass, and I just might try to forget this whole incident ever occurred. Will that suffice?"

"No one just 'passes through'," Kiongozi said, circling Hago threateningly. "They must pay with the ultimate price: their *lives*."

Hago rolled his eyes. "Oh, can you be any more dramatic, you tiresome nuisance?" he asked. "It's like living with a clone of myself."

"Prepare to die," said Kiongozi, extending his claws.

Hago sighed, and then noticed something glinting at him from a nearby bush. A sly smile spread across his face. "Oh, yes, if you must," he falsely agreed. "But let me just get something first..."

Kiongozi gave him a confused look. "What on earth are you...?"

Hago pulled his staff out of the bush. "There you are! Oh, I've missed you!" He kissed the staff, before pointing it at Kiongozi. "Now, if you wouldn't mind, I think I'll take control of your 'pride'. It'll help to have some redecorators for my new home."

"I don't—"

The eyes on top of the staff began to glow a sinister red. Kiongozi stared right at them, transfixed. His eyes began to reflect the very same colour. He was under Hago's control.

"Oh, isn't this just splendid?" Hago asked himself. "Five minutes and already I can't go without some kind of evil deed. I suppose it's just all a part of my psychotic nature." He turned his attention to the motionless Kiongozi. "Now, *you*, you miserable creature! I want you to gather up that little pride of yours and bring them to this very spot. Then I just might be able to begin the retirement plan of the century – if my luck keeps up like this, of course."

"Yes, master," Kiongozi obeyed. "I will bring them at once..."

He turned and walked off like a lazy zombie, leaving Hago with a maniacal grin on his face.

"Now, if I were a beautiful, perfect, lovely home, then where would I be?" he pondered, putting a paw to his chin. "Of course, it'd probably be right under my nose. I'd even expect someone to already be living there!"

"Tojo, isn't this the most beautiful, perfect, lovely home?"

Hago's eyes snapped on to the sound of the voice. Squinting into the distance, he could see a clearing beyond a cluster of thick trees. He could just about make out two figures standing in the middle of it. They looked like... *cubs*.

"Cubs?" Hago exclaimed. "*Cubs*? Oh, for the love of hate, will they ever stop *tormenting* me?"

He sighed. "Now I'm going to have to exterminate them in a highly painful way." He then smiled. "Not that it's a bad thing, of course..."

Chapter 4: Chapter 4: The Magic Master

Chapter Four: The Magic Master

"Tojo! Tama! You around here?" Simba called as he walked through the seemingly identical surroundings of the jungle. It was very hard for him to find his way around. He couldn't ever imagine living here...

"Did they decide to move to the very edge of the jungle?" Haiba asked, not too happy about having to search for Tama and Tojo for close to three hours now. "Because that's a *really* long way to walk."

"I didn't see you complaining when you moved out to Jowai Resort," Nala noted. "That's on the edge of the jungle, isn't it? And I didn't see you complaining when you had your paws all over that lioness's—"

"Uh, what's Jowai Resort?" Simba asked, confused. "And how come I've never heard of it?"

"Only the greatest place in the world ever," Haiba responded. "You want sun? They've got it. You want girls? They've got 'em. You want... anything? Well, they've got it. I could have practically lived my whole life there."

"And it's why you ended up becoming the fattest cub in existence," Nala retorted. "I've never seen someone so exhausted trying to get up in the morning."

"Oh, why don't I just go back to being Don Haiba?" he asked sarcastically. "I'll just stuff my face morning, noon and night. Would you like that, huh?"

"Jeez, Haiba, calm down," Simba said. "We're just kidding around."

"And I'm ready to fall asleep!" he exclaimed. "If we don't find Tiny Tojo or his repulsive girl, then I'm going back – that is, if I can find my way back."

"Yeah, but what if you leave and we both get eaten by a snake?" Nala asked. "How would you feel then?"

"And how would *you* feel if I left and got eaten by a snake on my way back?" Haiba replied. "Think about *that*."

"Can we please stop arguing?" Simba begged. "I think the sun is getting to us all. I'm frying out here!"

"But we're in the shade," Haiba pointed out. The three of them were stood in the shadow of a tall tree.

"Yeah – that's what makes it worse," Simba said. "If we don't find Tama and Tojo soon, then I don't think we'll be able to find ourselves."

"Simba, if you die, then can I marry Nala?" Haiba asked.

"What? No!" he yelled.

"Oh, okay. Just asking," he said. "So if Nala dies, then can I marry *you*?"

"Don't ask weird questions like that," Simba said. "It's starting to creep me out. I'm even having dreams where you cuddle up with me in my sleep."

Haiba's eyes shifted nervously. "Uh, those might not be dreams..." he muttered under his breath.

"Guys, you know it's gonna be all worth it in the end," Nala assured them. "We'll see Tama and Tojo, and have a great time – without any villains or gory deaths. It's my idea of a perfect day."

"So we're starting to have social lives now?" Haiba said. "Oh, don't worry. I'll stop that ten-foot monster once I've had a nice chat with Tama.' Is this really what our lives are coming to? I feel like we're growing up."

"Don't be silly, Haiba," Nala said, rolling her eyes. "Everyone knows that no one grows up in the Pride Lands."

"Seriously?" Haiba asked. "Doesn't that raise a slight cause for concern? After all, we should be about teenagers by now – if you think about it."

"Haiba, Haiba, Haiba," Simba said with a smile, putting a paw around Haiba's shoulder. "When you think about something that could be very dangerous and makes no sense, then what do you do?"

"Uh—"

"Forget about it. Now let's get going." Simba hurried onwards.

"Um, is he okay?" Haiba asked Nala.

"Oh, don't mind him," she replied, following after Simba. "Simba just doesn't want to grow up. It's been one of his little fears ever since one day he kept getting older and almost died. He even broke up with me. Now that's just sad."

"What's sad is you kissing me the other week," Haiba mumbled.

Nala gasped. "Haiba, don't say anything about that!" she hissed. "You know what happened was only because of my stupid evil personality I picked up!"

"Yeah, but why is it that I'm always the victim? Can't I have a girlfriend? Or boyfriend? Or a tree? Someone to tuck me in at night; read me a bedtime story; give me a goodnight kiss?"

Nala narrowed her eyes. "Aren't you getting confused with a mother?"

Haiba just grinned. "I'll let you be the judge of that."

"Well, thank you for that full body massage, Tojo," Tama said as she got to her paws. "It was *especialy* good."

"Any time, Tama," said Tojo. "You know I always enjoy exploring places no cub has ever gone before."

"The main point is that I'm fully relaxed now," Tama explained. "It's put me into a good mood for making our new, great, cool friends. Now, I suggest that we start looking over by the—"

A sudden evil laugh rang through the air, cutting Tama off and causing her to frown.

"Either someone just told the funniest joke in the world or something's very wrong," she said.

"Oh, do excuse my loudness," said a new voice. Tama and Tojo turned to see a strange lion with a crooked back and wielding an odd staff walk into view. "It helps me to maintain my evil reputation."

"Who are you?" Tama asked. "And get out of my home – this is private property."

"My name is Hago," he introduced himself, "and you just may have heard about me before."

"No," said Tojo.

But Tama seemed to be realising who he was. "Hey! I *have* heard about you before!" she exclaimed. "You're that stupid lion who was always arguing with my parents!"

"I thought you hated your parents?" said Tojo, raising an eyebrow.

"I *do* hate my parents," Tama said, "but they would have actually bothered to *train* me if he didn't keep causing trouble!"

"Excuse me, *little girl*, but your parents were nothing more than amateur freaks," Hago said. "Granted, they actually had *biological* magic ability, but that's beside the point! *I'm* the one that's still alive!" he proclaimed, pointing to himself with a claw.

"You can do magic with that puny stick?" Tama asked, sounding very doubtful. "I'd like to see you try."

Hago shrugged. "Very well."

Zap!

A purple laser shot out from his staff, striking Tojo in the chest and sending him flying straight into a tree about ten feet away. *Crack!* It splintered in two, and he collapsed to the ground.

Tama gasped, running over to Tojo's side. "Tojo! Are you okay?"

Tojo smiled dumbly. "Two plus two is... six," he said in a dazed tone, before falling unconscious.

Tama glared at Hago angrily. "You're going to regret that, buster," she growled. "He just gave me the massage of my life!"

Hago laughed. "Don't make me laugh!"

"But you just *did* laugh," Tama told him.

"Be silent!" Hago ordered. "I didn't make it back from the dismal afterlife for nothing! Now, it's time to say goodbye, Tama."

"Oh, yeah?" said Tama challengingly. "Well, for your information, Mr Psycho, I have magic powers, too!"

"Oh, no!" Hago cried, pretending to be frightened. "Please don't hurt me! I – I'm really sc-sc-scared!"

"No one insults my fear capabilities!" Tama yelled, before holding out her forepaws. She closed her eyes in concentration, and—

—a tree behind Hago burst into flames. He glanced at it, then at Tama. "Was that seriously the best you can do?"

Tama smiled nervously. "Oops."

Hago grinned. "Say goodbye, girlie."

Wielding his staff like a golf club, Hago took a long swing back, and then a big swing forwards.

Whoosh! Tama was suddenly struck in the chest by an invisible force, and sent flying into the air, disappearing over the trees.

"*Curses!*" her voice dragged on into the distance.

Hago just laughed. "Did she really just say 'curses'?"

AN: I quite like the idea of Tama being sent flying into the air. Since this is the funny I story, I can do stuff like that. And who thought Hago was going to retire? Not to say that he can't be evil while he's at it. And did you like the new appearance of the Mungu Pride's leader, Kiongozi? I bet you didn't expect to see him again! I bet half of you can't even remember who he was! If you do, then there's an invisible cake in it for you...

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: You Can Do It

AN: Here's where it gets weird, folks. You like Disney songs, right? I hope so – otherwise this story is going to go right down the drain. 'Cause in Chapter Six, we're going to have ourselves a little singalong! You can play an instrumental of the music along with the story, if you want. Consult the title of the sixth chapter for the song.

HeeroKitsune17: The Family of Blood have been reduced to nothing more than a pile of bones – Vitani included. The only surviving remnants of them are Nala and Sarafina...

LionKingFactsGuy2: I don't have any plans at the moment to introduce Chumvi or Kula into the stories. I'd only do that if I needed them for something.

the-mysterious-other: Seriously? Hago is a word? Wow. I thought it was just something I made up. Oh, well. That's Spanish for you. Personally, I never really enjoyed languages at school. Got rid of them as soon as I could.

anonymous13: Ah, so you noticed that the Mungu Pride were still on my profile! Yes, that was supposed to be a bit of a clue that they would return at some point. Turns out it's *this* story! I knew those slimy creeps would never stay away for good...

Chapter Five: You Can Do It

"I think I must be cursed," Tojo said to himself as he lay on the ground, twisted in an awkward position. "So many bad things can't keep happening to such a good cub."

"Do you have to complain so much?" Hago asked, standing over Tojo and looking a little displeased. "Can't you just live with your misery for more than two minutes without breaking the peaceful silence around here? Just look at me – quiet as a mouse."

"But all you do is shout angrily all the—"

Hago grabbed Tojo by the throat, snarling at him. "Now, now, cub, I think you need to know your place."

"The bottom of society?" Tojo presumed. "I think I'm already there. I mean, I have you seen how underdeveloped these claws are? I wouldn't be able to snap a twig."

"I said enough of the complaining!" Hago yelled. "Now, you useless little thing, I'm going to ask you a very good question: how much do you value your life?"

Tojo thought for a moment. "Not much," he finally answered. "If I died then no one would even notice."

Hago smiled evilly. "Well, that's just music to my ears. Now I know that when I skin you alive – slowly and painfully, I might add – no one is going to come looking for you. No questions asked. Just how I like it."

"Couldn't you just, uh, dump me in a river somewhere?" Tojo pleaded. "I kind of don't want to die."

"Well, you should have thought about that before you decided to invade my beautiful home," Hago retorted.

"Hey! This is mine and Tama's home!" Tojo argued. "Who do you think you are, just coming right in and taking it from us?" He then gasped, covering his mouth in shame at his sudden outburst of anger.

"You're going to regret being so angry, cub," Hago said threateningly. "Just for that, I'm going to skin you alive *extra* slowly."

"Oh, dear," said Tojo worriedly. "I would call Tama for help, but I think she's about three miles away."

"Why did I have to end up about three miles away?" Tama complained as she stood in the middle of an area in the jungle she had never been in before. Everything looked so far away and alien to her. What she'd give to go back home right now...

"And how come people keep bothering me?" she continued. "I've just about had enough of all those evil bad guys coming to annoy the heck out of me!"

"Evil bad guys?" asked a voice from behind her. "What did I tell you, Nala? Something *a/ways* goes wrong, doesn't it?"

Tama whipped round to see Simba, Nala and Haiba. "Oh, don't tell me you losers have come to get on my nerves, too!"

"Losers?" said Haiba. "Well, thanks. Nice to be made welcome."

Tama shook her head. "Oh, sorry. Went back six months for a moment there. Forgive me."

"Nice place you've got here," Haiba said, admiring the burnt and charred trees surrounding them all. "It's... uh, how do you say it? *Burning* with beauty."

"This isn't where I live!" Tama cried. "My home has suddenly been taken over by a psychotic... *psycho* with a weird staff! I was knocked about three miles into the air!"

"And just *how* did you manage to survive?" Simba questioned. "Shouldn't your body be scattered all over the place?"

"I hit several trees on the way down!" Tama replied. "I'm bruised – and very upset – but I'm not dead. Now just what *are* you doing here?"

"Well, we *were* going to stop by for a little visit," Nala explained, "until, of course, you mentioned that your home was suddenly taken over by a psycho – namely, my father."

Tama's eyes widened in shock. "Your... *father*?"

Nala nodded, not sounding too happy about it. "Yeah."

Tama frowned and growled, before pouncing at Nala. "*That's it, Nala! I'm going to kill you this time! How dare you get your own father to ruin my happy marriage!*"

She had her claws around Nala's throat. Simba just stared at the commotion, confused. "*Marriage?*"

"*It's a... long... story!*" Tama replied loudly, continuing to strangle Nala.

"Aren't you going to *help*?" Nala managed to choke out.

"Oh." Simba hurried over to Tama and grabbed her away from Nala. "Tama, stop it. Nala didn't send her father after you."

"Then just what the heck is she talking about?" Tama asked, wrenching herself away from Simba and backing away. "I bet you're all in cahoots with him! You're out to get me! I know it! Stay back!"

"Tama—" Simba began.

"Back, I say!" Tama yelled, before turning to run and crashing straight into a tree. She crumpled to the ground, unconscious almost instantly.

"Well, *that* went well," Haiba said.

When Tama awoke, she found Simba, Nala and Haiba looking down on her. "You awake yet?" Haiba asked.

"Get away from me, you traitors!" Tama cried. "I don't understand how you could do such an awful thing—"

Simba covered her mouth with a paw. "Tama, *please* listen to us for just two seconds. We're not in cahoots with Nala's father! She doesn't even like him! In fact, she wishes he were *dead*! Come to think of it, wasn't he dead *already*?" he asked, shooting a curious glance at Nala.

She shrugged in response. "I don't know," she answered. "You know what that... *monster* is like. Always coming up with ways to bring himself back to life. I think it's about time that someone shut him up once and for all."

"I thought that's what we did last time," Simba grumbled. Truth be told, he would rather face the Interceptor, Shocker and an Inque than Hago. He was a nasty one, that lion. Despite his insanity, he still had a certain... persistence that never seemed to end. "I wonder what his plan is going to be today."

"And just where is Tiny Tojo?" Haiba wondered. "I haven't had the chance to make fun of him yet."

"Oh, gosh!" Tama exclaimed. "Tojo! I left him there with creepy staff dude! Oh, he's going to end up skinned alive!"

"Don't be so silly," Haiba said. "He's not going to end up skinned alive."

"He won't?" Tama asked hopefully.

"Nah," Haiba assured her. "He's going to end up *slowly* skinned alive."

"You're not exactly helping," Nala told him.

"I apologise."

"I think it's pretty simple to defeat him," Simba said. "I mean, now that we have Tama on our side."

"What do you mean?" Tama asked.

"Well, think about it," Simba said. "Hago's magical; *you're* magical. Just use your powers to send him packing!"

"I can't use my powers! Everytime I try, it just ends up in disaster!" Tama said.

"Oh, come on, it can't be *that* bad," Haiba said.

"Oh, really?" Tama challenged. "If I tried to hit you with some kind of magical beam, then I'd probably end up hitting someone two miles away. *That's* how badly trained I am!"

"But that's the only way to stop him!" Simba persisted. "Come on, Tama! You know you can focus your magic if you try! You've done it before! Remember? When I kept growing up and it just wouldn't stop? You saved me!"

"Yeah – but that took a *lot* of hard work," she replied. "This guy's going to be trying to hit me with everything he's got! I won't be able to concentrate!"

"Tama, if anyone can do it, then you can," Nala assured her. "What would Tojo say if he were here right now?"

Tama thought for a moment. She sighed.

"He would say, 'Don't give up, Tama. I believe in you.'" A sudden smile formed on her face. "I guess he does help a lot of the time."

"You see? It only takes a bit of romance and you can do practically anything," Haiba said. "This is why I need a girlfriend. I want to be able to do amazing things – like being able to jump right over the biggest tree in the jungle! Wouldn't that be something?"

"Yes, it would be something: something useless," Nala replied.

Tama raised a paw. "Actually, I was kinda going to do that to get back home..."

"*What?*"

***Chapter 6*: Chapter 6: You're Only Second Rate**

Chapter Six: You're Only Second Rate

"Now, you're all probably wondering why you're here," Hago said.

The entirety of the Mungu Pride stared back at him.

"Well, *yeah!*" they all exclaimed.

"It may be a bit of a shock," Hago explained, "but your leader—"

"Who for some reason decided to jump off a cliff," said a lion called Kiume, "right after he told us to come here."

"Yes, he did jump off a cliff," Hago agreed, "but that was only because he was extremely suicidal. His last wish was for you to help me – his long lost best friend."

"Help you with what?" Kiume asked. "Does it involve picking out the eyeballs of random cubs?"

"Hmm..." Hago smiled. "I like your style – what did you say your name was?"

"It's Kiume," he replied.

"Well done, Kiume, for that... *gruesome* idea," Hago told him. "For that, you get promoted to second-in-command."

"Oh, yay!" Kiume exclaimed excitedly. "But second-in-command of... *what*, exactly?"

"Oh, it's all very simple," Hago replied. "You see, I have decided to make this my new home. And I need your combined help to make it the ultimate dream home for a villainous monster such as myself," he explained. "Of course it's all redecoration – I can't live in a bright, colourful place like this."

"Uh... I guess not," Kiume replied, while scratching his head. "So, uh, what do you want us to do, boss?"

"Boss? Ooh – I like that, yes! You can all start calling me 'boss' from now on. Is that clear?" he asked the pride.

"Yes, *boss!*" they all chorused.

"Very good. Now, the first order of business," Hago began, walking around in a circle, "is to burn all of the trees. I've always hated them, you know. There was one tree in the Pride Lands I was meaning to burn down, but that's a long story."

"How are we going to burn them?" one lioness asked.

"Simple," Hago responded. "Just grab a few sticks, start rubbing them together and they'll ignite soon enough. Then you can watch them all burn."

"Uh, right," said one lion confusedly. "But won't that be dangerous?"

"Don't be so ridiculous," said Hago. "I'll just freeze the flames in time with my helpful staff. It'll complete the decoration and give it a nice fire effect!" He chuckled to himself. "Ooh, this decorating is fun! I think I'm getting a passion for fashion!"

"So what do we do after burning everything?" Kiume asked.

"Gather all the skulls you can find," Hago instructed. "I'd like to have a massive pile of them in that corner over there. It'll make the place look very depressing and horrifying. No one's going to come bursting in when they see a giant pile of dead skulls looming over them."

"And what if he can't find any?" a lioness asked.

"Oh, that's simple," Hago said. "I'll just use *your* skulls as a substitute. I might even put some of your heads on a stick in the ground – as a sort of warning to potential intruders. It's to die for!"

"Okay – flames and skulls," Kiume concluded. "Got it."

"Good. Now get to work!"

The Mungu Pride scattered in every direction, muttering amongst one another. Hago chuckled. "My workforce is very compliant," he said to himself. "I'll be living in luxury in no time."

"Um, Mr Hago, sir?"

Hago turned around to look at Tojo. He was tied to the tree with a series of thick vines, struggling anxiously.

"What do you want, you miscreant?" Hago yelled.

"Well, um, before you burn the trees down, can you untie me first?" he asked in a timid voice. "I really don't want to burn to death."

Hago shook his head. "I'm afraid not. You see, the whole *point* of this is to burn you alive! And since I'm going to freeze the flames permanently, you'll be experiencing an eternity of agony – just as I have. Isn't it just wonderful?"

"Oh, please, don't!" Tojo begged. "I'll do anything! Just let me go! I won't tell!"

"Silence!" Hago raised a paw to strike Tojo, but was interrupted by a voice.

"Strike him and you're dead!" a familiar voice yelled.

Hago turned around to see Tama entering the clearing. "*You* again!" he cried. "I thought I sent you three miles away!"

"I'm magical," was Tama's reply. "I decided to use my beautiful powers to jump about three miles in the air, and landed right here." She smiled. "And now I'm going to make sure that you never bother me or my cutesy-wutesy boyfriend ever again."

"Must you call me that?" Tojo moaned.

"Tojo, it's only because I love ya," she assured him. "As for you, Mr I'm-Really-Evil, I think I'm going to teach you a lesson."

"Oh, are you really?" Hago asked, sounding like he didn't believe a word she said. "And how are you going to do that?"

"With my magic!" Tama proclaimed, only to receive a burst of laughter from Hago.

"Oh, that's a good one!" he exclaimed. "Your magic!"

Tama growled, her cheeks turning red. "You are so dead."

She lifted a paw, scrunching up her eyes in concentration.

Snap! Tojo was lifted high into the air, wrenched from the tree. "Tama! I told you to focus on your aim!"

Tama turned around, her eyes widening in surprise. "Oh, my gosh."

"I think being tied to the tree was a better option!" Tojo yelled, eyes bulging at how high up he was. "Get me down, Tama!"

"I'm sorry!" Tama cried, before lowering her paw.

Tojo was roughly dropped to the ground. *Bam!* "Oh..." he moaned in pain. "I need medical attention."

Hago had tears in his eyes from laughing so hard. "This is the most I've ever laughed," he said. "You should think about becoming a comedian!"

"I'm going to make you pay!" Tama threatened. "You can't just do this! I'm better than you!"

Hago rose to his paws, smiling. "Is that so?" he challenged. "Tama, I'm afraid that you're just not good enough. Quite an amateur. Sort of... second rate."

"What?"

And then, something very, very odd happened.

Hago began to sing.

I must admit,

*Your puny tricks are amusing
I bet you've got some more
In your paws*

"Well, actually—" Tama began, before Hago's singing cut her off.

*Now here's your chance
To get the best of me
Hope your magic's hot!*

"Excuse me?"

*C'mon, cub
Let's see what you've got!
You try to slam me
With your hardest spells
But unfortunately your magic
Doesn't just quite jell
I'll set the record straight
Your aim is way too late
You're only second rate!*

"Well, that's not very nice—"

*You think you're strong,
When you're actually lame
You've got a lot to learn
About the wizard game
So for your information
I'll reiterate
You're only second rate!
Lions cower at the power
Of my staff!
My magic is deadly
With every hit!
But if you're not convinced
That I'm invincible
Put me to the test!
I'd love to lay this rivalry to rest!*

"That's it!" Tama shot out her paws, firing two massive blue bolts of energy at Hago.

Hago simply absorbed them with his staff, continuing his jaunty tune.

*Go ahead and zap me
With your biggest bolt
Stick me in a trap
You look like a dolt!
You'll simply infuriate
I'll kill you and your mate
You're only second rate!
You know your flame blasts
Aren't fired up
And your massive jumps
Aren't good enough
Let me pontificate
Upon your sorry state
You're only second rate!*

Tama turned around and tried to walk away, only for Hago to pop into existence right in front of her!

Zaba-caba-dabra!

She turned around again, only to find Hago wearing a funny grey wig and grinning evilly at her.

Granny's gonna grab ya!

"That is the creepiest thing I've ever heard."

*Alakazam-da-mus
And this thing's bigger than the both of us!
So spare me your tremendous spell
Because as I've said
Your magic isn't well
And I can hardly wait
To discombobulate
I'll send ya back and packing
Until you can't communicate
I'm going to turn you
Into a bloody state
You're only second rate!*

Hago whacked Tama with his staff, sending her sailing over the trees once more.

"That song really sucked!" she cried as she vanished into the horizon.

"I thought it was quite fruity, actually," Tojo said with a little smile.

"What did I say about talking?" Hago yelled.

"I'll be good."

AN: It thought writing a version of *You're Only Second Rate* would be a nightmare. Looks like I was wrong. That was quite fun, wasn't it? Unless, of course, you hate Disney songs. Now you probably just want to put a bullet right between my eyes.

So what's going to happen to Tama? Will Tojo get his speaking rights back? Where are Simba, Nala and Haiba? Doesn't Hago play a good tune on the old piano? You'll have to find out in the exciting final chapter of *Tama's Trouble*!

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: A First Rate Finale

AN: Well, after all the tumbles, laughs and catchy Disney songs, it's time to finally put this story to rest. This is the final nail in the coffin for *Tama's Trouble*.

anonymous13: Hago is definitely Jafar in animal form. Same voice again, just as with the Interceptor.

KaylaDestroyer: Tama's powers know no bounds... There may be a lot more that cub can do...

kora22: Well, we had a little Shocker cameo in the previous story. When will we see him again? Maybe sooner than you think...

Kblade: That's Tojo and Tama for you. Cute as can be.

Chapter Seven: A First Rate Finale

"You might as well just kill me now," Tama said as she lay in the middle of a prickly bush. "I'm so mad that I'll probably explode anyway."

Simba, Nala and Haiba exchanged confused glances. "Didn't go so well, huh?" Simba asked, feeling a little awkward. So much for her being the only cub who could stop Hago...

"Oh, yeah, it went just fine," Tama said sarcastically, rolling her eyes. "I was only sent flying right back to where I was sent flying in the first place." She raised an eyebrow at them. "Any more bright ideas?"

"Right, that's it – we're smashing his head in," Nala declared, stomping off in a random direction.

"Nala, wait," said Simba, motioning for her to stop. There wasn't much use in going up against Hago without some kind of a plan. It was very likely that he would turn them into ash within five seconds if they just walked right in. "We need to think about this. You know how dangerous Hago is."

"As I've learned," Nala retorted. She shuddered at the thought of all the horrible things Hago – her own father – had done. Sometimes her parentage wasn't something she liked to dwell on – especially in light of the circumstances... "But it's not like we haven't stopped him before."

"Yeah – usually he's so arrogant that he just kind of ends up stopping himself," Simba said. "But he's still dangerous. I don't want any of us getting hurt."

"It's too late for that," Tama said, suddenly reminded of the throbbing pain that was coursing right through her body. "Way too late..."

Haiba narrowed his eyes. "I sense a disturbance in the Cute..."

Nala gave him a puzzled stare. "Haiba, what are you talking about?"

"The Cute," Haiba said. "It's a mystical power that binds all of the adorable cubs together. Some poor – and most likely cute – cub is in serious danger. I can feel it in my bones..."

"Haiba, are you insane?" Simba yelled. "There is no mystical power that binds all of the cute cubs together! Although, come to think of it, I do feel like something's a bit wrong..."

"You're *both* insane!" Nala exclaimed. "Someone's in danger and all you can think about is how cute you are?"

"Ah – so you *do* believe me about someone being in trouble!" Haiba accused.

"I – uh... Just shut up!"

"You're missing the point," Tama said, slowly inching her way out of the bush. "There's only one other cute cub around here, and that's Tojo! It's obvious that he's being horribly tortured!"

"Oh, gosh! Please! No more! I'd rather die!"

"Just keep swimming," Hago instructed, watching as Tojo swam around in an extremely muddy river off to the side of the

clearing. "I want you so dirty that your fur will never go back to its original colour!"

Tojo moaned. "But I like being clean! It kills me to even see the tiniest bit of dirt on my fur! I feel like... *Tama!* Eww..."

"I'm just preying on your weaknesses," Hago informed him. "A nice little start to your neverending agony. I do pride myself on being extremely cruel. Although, from your point of view, I suppose that doesn't need saying, does it?"

He chuckled cruelly. Tojo just squirmed around in the filth-infested river, feeling like he would never ever be clean again. "It's times like this when I wish I had some kind of random rescue appear right by the side of the river."

A thoughtful look crossed Hago's face. "Hmm..." he said. "I sense a disturbance in the Cute."

"The what?"

"See?" asked Haiba, as he hid in the top of a tree overlooking the dirty river with Simba, Nala and Tama. "The Cute *does* exist."

"Yeah, that's not exactly a good thing right now," Nala said. "It means he knows we're here. Those giant jumps of yours landed us awfully close, Tama."

"Hey, don't blame me," said Tama defensively. "I'm untrained, remember? Besides, it's not as if he knows we're right here, in this very spot."

Simba nodded. "That's a good point. No, it's a *great* point. We still have the element of surprise. All it takes is a good pounce to catch him unawares."

Haiba nodded, grinning. "Oh, I get it. We all go for him at the same time and he doesn't stand a chance."

"Exactly!" Tama exclaimed. This sounded like a great idea! "Okay, so we quickly – but quietly – pounce at him in three seconds."

"Okay," said Simba. "One... two... three— *Whoa!*"

The branch the four were perched on snapped in two, and they were all sent plunging into the muddy river below, causing a massive *splash* and completely decimating the supposed 'element of surprise'.

Hago grinned. "Oh, what a pleasant surprise! If it isn't the littlest rescue party, come to save your friend!"

Simba spat some filthy water out of his mouth. "Oh – oh, yeah?" he said, teeth chattering at the surprisingly cold temperature of the water. "Well, w-w-we're going to t-t-teach you a l-lesson!"

"Simba, in the extremely long and tedious time I've known you, you have yet to teach me anything of worthy value," Hago retorted. "In fact, I think I've actually gotten stupider."

"Oh, that's it!" Simba growled, swimming over to the edge of the river and heading straight for Hago. "I'm going to tear your throat right out!"

"I'd love to see you try," Hago said. "Simba, I'm afraid you're just not good enough. In fact, you're quite pathetic. Sort of... second rate."

"What?"

Hago started to sing again.

I must admit,

Your—

"No, no!" Tama said, waving her paws in the air and interrupting the song as she clambered out of the river. "We're not going through that again!" She looked back at the sickly river. "Hey – that's the first bath I've had in months!"

Tojo frowned. "You think *that* was a bath?"

"That's it – I'm destroying you all," Hago decided, raising his staff. "Prepare to be disintegrated!"

A curious look crossed Haiba's face. "Hey, just how *do* you prepare to be disintegrated, anyway?"

"You don't," Hago replied. "It's just a very evil thing to say. A way to realise that you're completely doomed."

"I've just realised something," Nala said. "We *are* completely doomed. We really should have thought about a plan B."

"Unfortunately, it's too late for you," Hago told them. "Now it's time for your agonising deaths. I will say that you have been most worthy adversaries, though. But now the fun is over. I can retire safe in the knowledge that my greatest enemies have finally been eliminated."

"Um, but what about those 'decorators' you hired?" Tojo questioned. "I haven't seen them in a while."

"Oh, them," Hago said with a smile. "Their fires weren't powerful enough, so I just decided to punish them in a severe way."

The five cubs suddenly noticed all of the bloody skulls dangling from the tree branches...

Hago pointed his staff at Simba, Nala, Haiba and Tojo. He laughed maniacally at the top of his voice. Victory was finally his.

The four cubs exchanged frightened glances. This was it for them. They were about to meet their horrible ends.

A glowing green laser blast began to form at the top of the staff, humming with an almost electrical form of power. It seemed to grow more and more intense the louder Hago laughed.

Simba, Nala, Haiba and Tojo gulped in fear. Took their last breaths. Waited to die.

And then...

Zap!

Hago let out a bloodcurdling scream as he was sent flying backwards, his own bolt striking him in the chest. He crashed right into a tree, and slid to the ground—

—just as his whole body ignited in flames.

Simba, Nala, Haiba and Tojo looked on in shock as Hago screamed in agony, the flames frying his entire body.

Then the flames faded away, and all that was left was Hago's skeleton.

He was dead once more.

"But I... I don't get it," said Simba, stepping forwards. "How did he...?"

"Aren't I just a cheeky little monkey?"

The four cubs turned their heads to see Tama drop down from a tree, a victorious smile on her face.

"Tama?" said Haiba. "*You* killed Hago?"

"Of course I did," she retorted. "All it took was to turn that little staff of his around while he wasn't looking so it was facing him. Then he blasted himself, and now he's just scraps and bones. Hey, Tojo, I think I can make a neat little decoration out of his skull..."

"You're sick in the head, Tama," Tojo told her. "Really sick."

"Well, sometimes it takes a sick cub to take care of an even sicker magical lion," Tama replied. She looked at Hago's remains. "*Now* who's second rate, huh?"

A slow chuckle began to build in Tama's throat. Then it turned into a giggle, before descending into complete evil laughter.

"Tama?"

She snapped out of it, looking at Simba. "Huh?"

"You seemed to be laughing evilly," he informed her.

"Oh."

Haiba touched her on the shoulder. "Don't give into your anger, Tama. It leads to the dark side of the Cute."

"Oh, will you cut the mystical stuff out already?" Nala complained.

"Look, I don't want her to turn into Darth Tama, that's all," Haiba replied. "It's for her own safety."

"That's it," Nala declared, before walking away. "I'm going home. So much for a nice visit..."

"Yeah – I'm with you," Simba agreed. "See you round, Tama and Tojo. It was fun. Well, actually, it wasn't fun; it was terrifying, but you get the point."

"Yeah." Tojo sighed, waving after them. "See ya."

"Remember, Tama," Haiba said, pointing at her as he backed away. "Anger is the path to the dark side." He waved his paws dramatically, whispering in a creepy voice. "*The dark side...*"

And then the three were gone, leaving Tojo and Tama all on their own. Peace had been restored once more.

"Well, that was a painful one, I can tell you," Tama said, collapsing onto her back. "I'm going to need at least *ten* massages before I can recover from this."

"I think I'm going to have to clean away that skeleton," Tojo said, sparing a concerned glance at what remained of Hago. "And hide every single one of his bones in separate locations. You never know when someone might try to resurrect him."

Tojo wandered over to Hago's remains, before discovering his magical staff lying just a few feet away.

"Tojo, what are you doing?" Tama asked through closed eyes.

As if enticed by it, Tojo picked up the staff. For the precious few seconds that he held it, he was suddenly overthrown by a massive amount of power and pleasure all at once. Evil thoughts began to stir around in his head. Commands to hurt, to maim, to *kill*...

"Tojo? *Tojo!*"

Tojo snapped out of the trance, dropping the staff and turning to Tama. "Huh?"

"What are you doing?" she asked, confused. "I need a massage over here."

"Um... I was... Nothing," Tojo replied, sparing one final glance at the staff before heading over to Tama. "Nothing..."

The End

AN: Now was that little scene at the end supposed to be funny or serious? Tojo might just have a little bit of the dark side in him. Do any of *you* sense a disturbance in the Cute...?

Well, that's it for this surprisingly lighthearted story. The next one just might be a little dark...

NEXT TIME: Simba, Nala and Haiba find themselves trapped in one of the most horrible situations imaginable, and reflect on whether it's really worth it to save those in danger, or to save themselves instead...